

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-40 have previously been cancelled. Claims 47 and 48 have also been previously cancelled. Claims 43, 44 and 54 are currently being amended. Claims 41, 42, 45, 46, 49-53, 55 and 56 are carried forward, all as follows:

Claims 1-40 (Cancelled)

41. (Previously Presented) A printing unit of a rotary printing press comprising:

at least one forme cylinder;

a forme cylinder barrel, said forme cylinder barrel having spaced first and second forme cylinder barrel ends including first and second forme cylinder barrel end support surfaces;

a forme cylinder intermediate support ring with a forme cylinder intermediate support ring outer support surface, said forme cylinder intermediate support ring being positioned between said spaced first and second forme cylinder barrel ends; and

an ink unit, said ink unit having at least one of an ink roller and an ink transfer cylinder, said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder having barrel ends, said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder barrel ends having barrel end support surfaces, said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder further having an intermediate support ring with an outer surface

between said barrel ends, said intermediate support ring outer surface of said forme cylinder intermediate support ring acting against said intermediate support ring outer surface of said intermediate support ring of said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder and said barrel end support surfaces of said forme cylinder barrel and of said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder barrel acting against each other.

42. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said inking unit includes both said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder.

43. (Currently Amended) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein each said intermediate support rings ~~are~~ is fixed against relative rotation with respect to its respective one of said forme cylinder barrel ends, said ink roller barrel ends and said transfer cylinder barrel ends.

44. (Currently Amended) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein each said intermediate support rings ~~are~~ is rotatable with respect to its respective one of said forme cylinder barrel ends, said ink roller barrel ends and said transfer cylinder barrel ends.

45. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said intermediate support rings are each circular support rings.

46. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said support surfaces are level.

Claims 47-48 (Cancelled)

49. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 41 further including a blanket cylinder having a plurality of axially spaced rubber blankets.

50. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said at least one forme cylinder has a plurality of axially spaced printing plates.

51. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein each of said forme cylinder and said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder each have an axis of rotation, said axes of rotation being located on a common plane.

52. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 51 wherein said at least one forme cylinder and said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder form a printing component.

53. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 51 wherein said common plane extends horizontally.

54. (Currently Amended) The printing unit of claim 51 wherein said common plane extends at an angle with respect to a horizontal plane.

55. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein each said intermediate support ring is located approximately in the center of its respective barrel.

56. (Previously Presented) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein each said support ring is a Schmitz ring.